

Written testimony to the Committee on Government Administration and Elections

I ask that you support Senate Bill 949, An Act Improving Data Security and Agency Efficiency, which will allow executive branch agencies to share data with researchers at colleges and universities. This action will permit the state to take advantage of the expertise of academic faculty who can assist the state in performing sophisticated data analyses.

I worked for 33 years as a Professor of Psychology at Central Connecticut State University. During that time, I worked in collaboration with the Center for Public Policy and Social Research on a number of projects with significant policy implications including the geographical distribution of group homes and the needs of returning Gulf War veterans.

In this era of downsized state agencies and restricted budgets, the proposed legislation makes good economic sense. It will allow the state to tap into the expertise and resources available at colleges and universities. This bill also contains provisions to safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of the data in ways that are consistent with the ethical codes maintained by the professional organizations of each academic discipline.

The outcomes of this legislation will benefit all the involved partners: The state will obtain analyses that will help them better understand the impacts of various policy decisions, while academics will be able to generate reports and scholarly publications that will help their own career development and provide opportunities for advanced students to learn how to perform various types of statistical analyses. Moreover, the opportunity to work with such data sets will resonate with many faculty and students' desire to make meaningful contributions to society. As someone whose academic career has been focused on applied research that could make a positive difference in the lives of my fellow citizens, this bill is a wonderful step in strengthening the collaboration between state government and academia. I STRONGLY SUPPORT PASSAGE OF SB 949.

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